

Message Text

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ACTION OES-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 EB-08 COME-00
/057 W

-----039043 310654Z /12

R 310415Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 099

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SPOP, IR

SUBJ: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN IRAN

REF: A. MEMORANDUM DATED 12 MAY 1978 FROM V.E. ADLER TO LUKE LEE;
IPPF EVALUATION/DEMOGRAPHIC FACTS-IRAN. B. TEHRAN A-90 C. TEHRAN
A-98

1. SUMMARY: THE CENSUS OF 1976 WAS COMPLETED IN NOVEMBER 1977 AND WAS PUBLISHED IN THE SPRING OF 1978. SINCE THEN, ARTICLES HAVE APPEARED IN THE PRESS (MAY AND AUGUST) AND A NEWS SPOT ON POPULATION GROWTH WAS READ ON NATIONAL IRANIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION (JUNE) WHICH DRAW FROM THESE DATA. THE SUMMARY DATA ARE REPORTED AS TABLE I FOLLOWING (SEE PARA 9). MOST SIGNIFICANT ARE THE HIGH URBANIZATION TREND SHOWN, AVERAGING NEARLY FIVE PERCENT PER YEAR, AND HIGH POPULATION GROWTH RATE WHICH HOVERS AROUND THREE PERCENT, OR TWICE THAT SOUGHT AS A GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVE ONLY A FEW YEARS AGO. THE PROPORTION OF URBAN TO TOTAL POPULATION OF THE COUNTRY IN 1976 REACHED 46.7 PERCENT, UP FROM 37.7 PERCENT IN 1966 AND 31.4 PERCENT IN 1956. END SUMMARY.

2. RAPID ECONOMIC GROWTH EXPERIENCED IN RECENT YEARS IN IRAN

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HAS BEEN A DRIVING FORCE IN THE PROCESS OF URBANIZATION. NEW ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND INCREASING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN MAJOR URBAN CENTERS HAVE CREATED A MASSIVE FLOW OF PEOPLE FROM VILLAGES INTO MAJOR CITIES SUCH AS TEHRAN, LEADING TO HIGH POPULATION CONCENTRATIONS IN URBAN AREAS, WITH CORRESPONDING IMPACT ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PATTERNS.

3. BETWEEN 1956 AND 1966 URBAN POPULATION INCREASED AT AN AVERAGE RATE OF 4.8 PERCENT COMPARED TO RURAL POPULATION GROWTH RATE OF 2.1 PERCENT PER YEAR. BETWEEN 1966 AND 1976 URBAN POPULATION GREW AT NEARLY THE SAME AVERAGE YEARLY RATE, BUT THE RURAL POPULATION REGISTERED A SHARP DECLINE, FROM 2.1 TO 1.1 PERCENT PER YEAR. THE CONTINUOUS HIGH GROWTH RATE OF URBAN POPULATION IN CONCERT WITH A DECLINING RURAL POPULATION GROWTH RATE IS VIEWED AS INDICATIVE OF THE HEAVY INFLUX OF PEOPLE FROM THE RURAL TO URBAN AREAS.

4. WITH THE 27 AUGUST CHANGE IN MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE (FROM DR. SHEIKHOESLAMZADEH TO DR. MOJDEHI), THE EMBASSY ANTICIPATES INCREASED GOVERNMENT EMPHASIS ON POPULATION AND FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS. THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN CRITICIZED FOR THE DISAPPOINTINGLY HIGH POPULATION GROWTH RATE, AND WE EXPECT RENEWED EFFORTS BY THE MINISTRY TO HELP CURTAIL THIS GROWTH.

5. THE 27 AUGUST NEWSPAPER ARTICLE OF KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL POINTS OUT THAT THE 1976 CENSUS REVEALS 9.7 PERCENT (949,000) UNEMPLOYED, ESSENTIALLY CONSTANT SINCE THE 1966 CENSUS. THE ARTICLE GOES ON TO HIGHLIGHT THE FACT THAT OVER 70 PERCENT OF THE EMPLOYED IN THE 1976 CENSUS OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION WERE ILLITERATE AND ANOTHER 2.7 PERCENT COULD BARELY READ. THE PERCENT OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE PEOPLE INCREASED FROM 26.3 TO 41 PERCENT. OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE SHOWS THAT 33.8 PERCENT WERE IN AGRICULTURE, INCLUDING ANIMAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HUSBANDRY, FORESTRY, HUNTING AND FISHING. ANOTHER 37.5 PERCENT WERE IN PRODUCTION AND RELATED JOBS; 16.7 PERCENT WERE IN SALES, CLERICAL AND SERVICE JOBS; 6.1 PERCENT WERE IN PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL JOBS, AND THE REMAINING 5.8 PERCENT WERE IN OTHER OCCUPATIONS. COMPARED WITH THE 1956 CENSUS, THE PROPORTION OF THE LABOR FORCE IN AGRICULTURE AND RELATED OCCUPATIONS DROPPED FROM 55.8 TO 33.8 PERCENT. CONVERSELY, THOSE ENGAGED IN PRODUCTION AND RELATED JOBS INCREASED BY 14.9 PERCENT--FROM 22.6 TO 37.5 PERCENT, REFLECTING GRADUAL SHIFT IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES. THE PROPORTION OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE MALES DROPPED FROM 83.9 PERCENT IN 1956 TO 70 PERCENT IN 1976 AS A RESULT OF INCREASED EMPHASIS ON EDUCATION IN URBAN AREAS, DEFERRING ENTRY OF MALES INTO THE LABOR FORCE. ON THE OTHER HAND, ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE FEMALES INCREASED SINCE 1956 FROM 9.2 PERCENT TO 13 PERCENT, SHOWING INCREASED FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN THE NATION'S ECONOMIC ACTIVITY. 68.3 PERCENT OF THE 33.6 MILLION IRANIAN POPULATION WERE TEN YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER, AND OF THESE 42.3 PERCENT WERE ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE.

6. CENSUS TAKERS CONSIDERED ALL PERSONS WHO WERE EMPLOYED AT ANY TIME DURING THE SEVEN DAYS PRECEDING THE ENUMERATOR'S VISIT, SEASONALLY UNEMPLOYED, AND THOSE WERE UNEMPLOYED BUT SEEKING EMPLOYMENT, AS ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE.

ECONOMICALLY INACTIVE SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION INCLUDED
HOMEMAKERS, STUDENTS, THOSE UNABLE TO WORK AND THE REMAINDER.

7. WHILE THE CENSUS DATA ARE CONSIDERED TO BE IMPRECISE
(REFERENCE A) THE 1976 CENSUS PUBLICATIONS REPRESENT A VALUABLE
UPDATING OF DECADE OLD REFERENCE DATA FOR IMPROVED DEMOGRAPHIC
AND COMMERCIAL ANALYSIS.

8. THREE REPORTS ARE BEING TRANSMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT, ALONG
WITH THE FIVE PERCENT POPULATION SAMPLING OF NOVEMBER 1977, FOR
IRAN'S PROVINCES (24 SEPARATE REPORTS). THE THREE REPORTS ARE

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INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 EB-08 COME-00
/057 W

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ENTITLED: (A) CURRENT TRENDS AND PATTERNS OF URBANIZATION IN
IRAN; (B) AN ESTIMATION OF INFANT AND CHILD MORTALITY IN IRAN
FROM SURVEY DATA; AND, (C) ABRIDGED LIFE TABLES FOR IRAN AND ITS
RURAL-URBAN AREAS, 1973-1976.

9. TABLE I ENTITLED "TOTAL RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION AND BASIC
INDICATORS OF URBANIZATION IN IRAN 1956-1976" FOLLOWS:
TABLE I-TOTAL RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION AND BASIC INDICATORS OF
URBANIZATION IN IRAN 1956-1976 X 1/

CENSUS YEAR	1956	1966	1976
POPULATION/MEASURES			
TOTAL IRAN'S POPULATION	18,954,704	25,788,722	33,591,875
AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE XX2/ ---		3.1 PERCENT	2.6 PERCENT
TOTAL RURAL POPULATION	13,001,141	16,069,647	17,893,332
AVG. ANNUAL RURAL GROWTH			
RATE XX 2/(PERCENT)	--	2.1 (2.4)	1.1 (1.5)
TOTAL URBAN POPULATION	5,953,563	9,714,521	15,698,543

AVG. ANNUAL URBAN GROWTH

RATE XX (PERCENT)2/ -- 4.8 (4.4) 4.7 (4.1)

RATION OF URBAN TO RURAL

GROWTH RATE -- 2.3 4.4

PERCENT RURAL POPULATION 68.6 62.3 53.3

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PERCENT URBAN POPULATION 31.4 37.7 46.7

SOURCE: POPULATION, CENSUS OF IRAN, 1956, 1966 AND PRELIMINARY
RESULTS OF 1976 CENSUS.

1/

X POPULATION OF URBAN LOCALITIES WITH 5,000 POPULATION AND OVER.

2/

XX THE AVERAGE POPULATION OF EACH INTERCENSAL PERIOD WAS TAKEN AS
THE DENOMINATOR TO CALCULATE THE ANNUAL AVERAGE GROWTH
RATE.

FIGURES IN BRACKETS ARE THE GROWTH RATES OBTAINED AFTER CONTROLLING
THE EFFECT OF RECLASSIFICATION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DATA, TRENDS, POPULATION GROWTH RATE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TEHRAN08285
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780355-0783
Format: TEL
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978082/aaaaabgn.tel
Line Count: 194
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fe2df25a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION OES
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1608852
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN IRAN
TAGS: SPOP, IR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fe2df25a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014